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Carved in Lead and Concealed in Stone

A Late Medieval *Sigillum Dei* at Doornenburg Castle

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In autumn 2011, an undergraduate at Radboud University, Maeyke Kok, elected to take an internship at Doornenburg Castle. Located about 8 miles from Nijmegen, Doornenburg Castle is home to a museum with a modest collection of art historical and archaeological artifacts, and it was Maeyke's job to inventory these objects. As it happened, her supervisor (the first author of this article) was on a site visit at the exact moment that Maeyke was processing a brick with a depression that housed a circular metal object (fig. 1). A pentagram and some strange markings such as an *agla* formula were visible on the metal artifact, but we thought little of it at the time, other than noting that it was an unusual coin or sigil of some sort. It was only when Maeyke chose an object to study in more detail that she returned to the brick and the sigil, and though she did not pursue the matter further after her internship, her supervisor was intrigued by the artifacts. It soon became clear that the metal object was a variant of the *Sigillum Dei* described and depicted in the *Liber iuratus Honori*. The *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*, after all, had all the trappings of the medieval, pre-John Dee version of the *Sigillum Dei*, complete

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Figure 1. The brick and the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*.

with a pentagram, a heptagon, a heptagram, another heptagon, concentric circles, mysterious sets of syllables, divine and angelic names, and a complete Great Schemhamphoras. Some of the readings on the sigil, however, did not correspond to the manuscript evidence of the Northwest European tradition of the *Sigillum Dei* in the *Liber iuratus*, and why this was so became evident when the first and second authors happened to meet at the copier a few months later. We had never met before, but when the first author told of the sigil, the second author told of his article, then forthcoming, on the South European tradition of the *Sigillum Dei* in Berengario Ganell's *Summa sacre magice*.¹ The second author's expertise proved the key to understanding the variant readings on the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*.

This article is a biography that charts the history and significance of an important magical artifact that has hitherto gone unnoticed because its existence was unknown to all but a few. The artifact in question is the oldest extant *Sigillum Dei* in the world so far, produced at the end of the medieval period and antedating John Dee's famous wax sigils of the *Sigillum Emeth* by about a century. It may seem a mistake to call a study of an object a biography, but there is no denying that the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* has an uncanny ability to maneuver itself into positions that guarantee its survival. Firmly

1. Jan R. Veenstra, "Honorius and the Sigil of God: The *Liber iuratus* in Berengario Ganell's *Summa sacre magice*," in *Invoking Angels: Theurgic Ideas and Practices, Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Claire Fanger (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2012), 151–91.

connected with the eventful history of Doornenburg Castle, the continued existence of the *Sigillum Dei* is due to an extraordinary series of coincidences, not least of which is the recent chain of events that enabled us to make its acquaintance. This article describes how the brick and sigil ended up at Doornenburg Castle, sheds light on the history, use, and materiality of the artifact, and analyzes the place of the sigil in the transmission of the *Sigillum Dei*.

DOORNENBURG CASTLE

Doornenburg Castle is situated in the eastern part of the Dutch province of Guelders, close to the German border. At the spot where the river Waal branches off the river Rhine, equidistant from Arnhem, which lies on the Rhine to the northwest, and Nijmegen, which lies on the Waal to the southwest, the castle occupies a strategic position overlooking the surrounding countryside and the rivers.² Doornenburg Castle is known to older generations of Dutchmen for its appearance in *Floris* (1969), a television series that narrates the adventures of a late medieval knight played by the young Rutger Hauer.³ Little do people realize, however, that the castle was actually brand new when *Floris* was filmed in 1968. Looking at the castle in its current state (fig. 2), it is indeed hard to believe that a building that has all the hallmarks of a medieval castle had only just been built. That the *Sigillum Dei* has survived at all is due to the very fact that Doornenburg Castle is no longer an original medieval fortification, so the history of the castle is essential to our understanding of the sigil.

In view of the strategic position of Doornenburg Castle at the junction of two major rivers, it is presumed that a fortification of some sort already occupied the current location in the early medieval period.⁴ The first reference to a fortification (*burch*) dates to 891, in a charter of a donation from the village of Doornenburg (*villa Doronburc*) to the Abbey of Lorsch. Subsequent references are to *Dorinburg* in 1046, and to *Dorenburg* in 1255. There are no indications what the fortification may have looked like in its early stages, and the first material evidence of its present form is from the fourteenth century. At

2. See <https://goo.gl/maps/ff7kn> [accessed July 7, 2014].

3. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elir3kYt9no> for the first episode of *Floris* [accessed July 7, 2014]. The castle and its bailey are first seen ca. 19 minutes into the episode.

4. For the description of Doornenburg Castle, we have relied on J. H. van Heek, J. H. A. van Heek JHzn, and A. P. van Schilfgaarde, *De Doornenburg* (s.l.: s.n. [1942, 1946, 1965]), Willem-Jan Pantus, *De Doornenburg* (Nijmegen: Stichting tot Behoud van den Doornenburg [1996]), and personal communications with Remie Aleven.



Figure 2. Doornenburg Castle in its present state. Photo courtesy of Remie Aleven.

that time, the castle probably consisted of a walled square, with a one-story hall built over a vaulted basement occupying about half of the square. Between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, the castle went through a series of architectural changes: two new structures came to occupy the remaining half of the walled square, stories were added to the buildings, the height of the outer wall was considerably increased, and a watchtower was added to the southwest corner of the great hall. The bailey to the north of the castle dates from the fifteenth century, though it is thought that this was the actual site of the early medieval fortification, with the castle itself a later medieval addition when the use of bricks became more widespread. The courtyard of the bailey featured a chapel, workshops, living quarters, and a farm house. The entrance to the castle was probably relocated from the east wall to the bailey in the north in the sixteenth century, and the two were connected by a bridge. Both the castle and the bailey were surrounded by a moat, and the bailey was accessible over a bridge and through a fortified gatehouse.

Despite its strong defensive structure (the outer wall of the castle is over six feet thick), Doornenburg Castle had never been under threat until the twentieth century. The castle was in the hands of a great succession of noble

families from the Middle Ages until 1936, but nothing spectacular happened to it in this entire period. It was never targeted in wars or sieges, and the extensive defensive measures that guaranteed the strength of the castle and the bailey, such as the wall walks and battlements, were never turned to tactical use. For a long time, the owners expanded and remodeled the castle to suit their residential needs until its last inhabitant died in 1847. Subsequent owners no longer resided in Doornenburg Castle, and decay set in. By the late nineteenth century, the castle was in a ruinous state, which made it a fitting backdrop for romantic paintings, but uninhabitable.⁵ Attempts at renovation failed until Jan Herman van Heek (1873–1957), a successful textile entrepreneur, bought Doornenburg Castle in 1936 in order to donate it to the Stichting tot Behoud van den Doornenburg (foundation for the preservation of Doornenburg Castle), which he had created shortly before. With financial support from the foundation and the government, Doornenburg Castle was completely renovated between 1937 and 1941. By the time the castle was restored to its late medieval glory, however, World War II had broken out. Doornenburg Castle did not suffer in the first few years of the war, but with the lost Battle of Arnhem during the Allied forces' Operation Market Garden (September 17–25, 1944), the Rhine delta became part of the front line. The area's inhabitants were evacuated, and Doornenburg Castle became a German outpost, codenamed Renate. The watchtower of the castle was used by German troops to overview the surrounding countryside and watch for enemy movements.

The German occupation of the castle drew fatal Allied attention. In a pamphlet written by van Heek in 1946, it was claimed that the German Wehrmacht abandoned and destroyed the castle in March 1945, but it later transpired that British bombers damaged the bailey in January 1945 and returned to utterly destroy the castle and most of the bailey on March 14, 1945 (fig. 3).⁶ The only structures left standing after the second air raid were the chapel and the gatehouse. A German military notebook found in the rubble showed that the German troops had already left the castle before the air raid on March 14, but they returned shortly afterward to blow up the

5. See <http://www.kastelenbeeldbank.nl/Gelderland/Doornenburg-Doornenburg/index.htm> [accessed July 7, 2014].

6. See van Heek, van Heek JHzn, and van Schilfgaarde, *De Doornenburg*, 31–32. Though it has been known for a long time that the castle was destroyed by Allied air raids, a recent report on the impact of World War II on Dutch castles and manor houses still blames the German explosive charges postulated by van Heek; see Mariëlle Bakker, *Vernietiging en wederopbouw: Nederlandse kastelen en buitenplaatsen tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Wijk bij Duurstede: Nederlandse Kastelenstichting, 2011), 80.



Figure 3. Doornenburg Castle after the first restoration and its subsequent destruction in an Allied air raid in March 1945. Photo Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed.

gatehouse so it could not be used as an observation post by Allied forces. It would take until after the end of the war for van Heek to discover that the castle he had restored so carefully in the course of four years had been turned into a bigger ruin than ever before in a matter of days. The prospect of starting from scratch held little appeal, but with the help of existing plans and the expertise of the foreman and builders from the previous restoration, it was thought feasible to at least restore the bailey. Financial aid from the government and the Stichting tot Behoud van den Doornenburg allowed the bailey to emerge from the rubble between 1946 and 1954. Starting in 1956, the castle itself was rebuilt on what remained of its foundation, a job that would be completed in 1964. It is no exaggeration, therefore, to claim that Doornenburg Castle was brand new when the television series *Floris* was filmed in 1968.

The events presented so far pertain to Doornenburg Castle and not to the sigil, but the fortunate preservation of the *Sigillum Dei* is a direct result of the destruction of Doornenburg Castle and van Heek's perseverance in facilitating the second restoration. The castle and bailey, after all, were to be rebuilt

with historical building materials. Many of the original bricks could be salvaged, but it proved necessary to obtain building materials from elsewhere too. Since many Dutch cities had been damaged in the war, whole neighborhoods were torn down to make place for modern buildings as part of a nationwide program of urban renewal after the war. Bricks from late medieval and early modern demolished buildings were reused in historical restorations, such as that of Doornenburg Castle. It is thought that the brick containing the *Sigillum Dei* reached Doornenburg Castle by way of one of the sites of urban renewal. In any case, the brick and sigil were discovered in a huge pile of bricks in the courtyard of the bailey. The precise circumstances surrounding the discovery are undocumented, however, so the origin of the artifacts is shrouded in mystery.

An information sign that used to accompany the brick and sigil when they were still on display dates their discovery to 1964, and allocated the probable origin of the artifacts to the Oeverstraat in Arnhem. In a personal communication, Remie Aleven of Doornenburg Castle dates the discovery of the brick and sigil to the second half of the 1950s, when work on the bailey had been completed and work on the castle had commenced. Aleven added that the builders indeed received bricks from Arnhem, but that they also unofficially seemed to have obtained building materials from sites of urban renewal in the Dutch province of Zeeland. Ronald Wientjes and Mick van Rootseler of the Guelders Archives observed that it is not impossible that the artifacts hail from the Oeverstraat in Arnhem, which did have some sixteenth-century houses that were torn down in the 1950s and 1960s, but that caution should be used in assigning the origin of the brick and sigil to this location in the absence of firm indications. Though it is tempting to situate the existence of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* in the larger context of magic practices in the late medieval and early modern Low Countries, as witnessed by surviving excerpts of grimoires in records of local witch trials in Guelders and Brabant,⁷

7. See Hans de Waardt, “Toveren en onttoveren: Achtergronden en ideeën van enkele bij toverij betrokken personen op de Veluwe in de zestiende eeuw,” in *Kwade mensen: Toverij in Nederland*, ed. Willem de Blécourt and Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra (Amsterdam: P. J. Meertens-Instituut, 1986), 152–202; and Ch. M. A. Caspers, “De mis van Adrianus en Adriana: De kennismaking van een Brabantse pastoor en een gewone gelovige met de geleerde magie: Breda, 1589–1590,” in *Munier ecclesiam: Opstellen over “gewone gelovigen”: aangeboden aan prof. dr. W. A. J. Munier ss.cc. bij zijn zeventigste verjaardag*, ed. J. van Laarhoven et al. (Maastricht: Limburgs Geschied- en Oudheidkundig Genootschap, 1990), 99–108. See also W. L. Braekman, *Middeleuuwse witte en zwarte magie in het Nederlands taalgebied: Gecommentarieerd compendium van incantamenta tot einde 16de eeuw* (Gent: Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde, 1997). De Waardt chronicled the trial against Jochum Bos, a cunning

the history of the brick and the sigil prior to their appearance at Doornenburg Castle is conjectural pending further research. It stands beyond doubt, though, that the *Sigillum Dei* might not have survived at all if Doornenburg Castle had remained unscathed.

THE BRICK AND SIGIL AS HISTORICAL OBJECTS

The brick and sigil have not been on display for a number of years, which makes it all the more remarkable that we learned of their existence in the first place. For a long time, the artifacts were exhibited in a small museum on the courtyard of the bailey, but there are no signs that they were ever regarded as valuable objects after their discovery. A description of Doornenburg Castle from the 1990s refers to the display of archaeological artifacts found in the area, such as Roman weapons and building materials (the river Rhine formed part of the Roman *limes germanicus*), and objects unearthed during the restoration of the castle, such as local pottery and a portable altar stone.⁸ The brick and sigil are not singled out in the description. Another indication that the value of these objects was not fully recognized is the fact that most valuable archaeological and art historical items collected by van Heek ended up in the collection of Huis Bergh (House Bergh). Huis Bergh is a castle in nearby 's-Heerenberg that van Heek had bought in 1912, and that he and his son (Jan Herman Alexander van Heek, 1920–2004) seem to have favored more than Doornenburg Castle, since it holds the more important objects, such as valuable paintings and medieval manuscripts. Perhaps because the brick and sigil are intimately connected with the history of Doornenburg Castle, or because they were not regarded as important artifacts, they did not end up in Huis Bergh but remained at Doornenburg Castle.

The continued obscurity surrounding the brick and sigil is all the more

man who was prosecuted by the criminal court of Guelders in Arnhem in 1550. The records of the case are still extant and include a grimoire formerly in Bos's possession (Arnhem, Guelders Archives, inv. nr. Hof 4524, 1550/6). While in custody, Bos was visited by Johann Weyer, who mentions the case in his own German translation of his *De praestigiis daemonum* (*Von Zauberern und Hexen: Von ihrem vrsprung, vnderscheid, vermögenheit, vnd rechtmessiger straaff [. . .]* (Cologne, 1571), fols. 90r–91r). Caspers documented the case of Adrianus van Wijffliet, a priest from the town of Rijen near Breda who was accused of practicing ritual magic in 1589. His file (Breda, Episcopal Archive, inv. nr. 869) contains a copy of the *Figura almadel* that is almost identical to the almadel in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm 407, p. 15. Both the almadel and the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* seem to testify to the transmission of magical material along the major rivers from the south to the north.

8. Pantus, *De Doornenburg*, 16.

remarkable to students of medieval magic in view of an abortive attempt to interpret the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* in 1984. At the time, van Heek Jr. tried to gather information on the items in the collection of Doornenburg Castle, and a letter in the castle's archive reports that the sigil had been lent to a certain M. F. Dierselhuis. Dierselhuis had made a sketch of the sigil and was in the process of studying it further. He was unaware that the sigil is a *Sigillum Dei*, but he did recognize its use in magical operations. Dierselhuis observed that "this is a pentacle that is to be used on a Saturday to summon cosmic spirits, preferably with a southeasterly wind. The pentagram points downwards, which indicates its use in ceremonial magic, in this case probably black magic."⁹ Dierselhuis did not clarify which written sources he based himself on. It would seem from his calling the sigil a pentacle that he relied on a work on Solomonic magic, such as the *Clavicula Salomonis*, which has many sigils described as pentacles.¹⁰ The reference to a weekday and a wind direction imply, furthermore, that Dierselhuis had a source of ceremonial magic in mind that prescribed much less intricate rituals than the *Liber iuratus* does. The construction and proper use of a *Sigillum Dei*, after all, is an exceedingly complex and arduous process that requires more than just a proper time and direction.¹¹ In any case, the sigil was returned to the castle and the update Dierselhuis promised in his letter never materialized.

9. Letter of M. F. Dierselhuis to J. H. A. van Heek, October 5, 1984: "dat het hier een pentakel betreft, welke op de zaterdag gebruikt wordt, bij voorkeur bij zuid-oosten wind en waarbij kosmische krachten opgeroepen worden. Het naar beneden gerichte pentagram duidt op ceremoniele magie en in dit geval vermoedelijk zwarte magie." The directions in the *Liber iuratus*, Ganell's *Summa*, and depictions of the *Sigillum Dei* pertain to upward pointing pentagrams, and this is clearly what the maker of the sigil intended (see also the section on the brick and seal as material artifacts below). Incidentally, the official image of John Dee's large wax sigil on the Web site of the British Museum is displayed upside down in comparison to the image in John Dee's *Mysteriorum libri quinque* (London, British Library, Sloane 3188, fol. 30r); see http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_image.aspx?image=ps317108.jpg&retpage=20576 [accessed July 7, 2014].

10. See S. Liddell MacGregor Mathers, ed., *The Key of Solomon the King (Clavicula Salomonis) now first Translated and Edited from Ancient MSS. in the British Museum* (London: George Redway, 1888). Another reason why Dierselhuis will not have relied on the *Liber iuratus* is that there was no edition of the text yet other than Driscoll's extremely rare publication (Daniel J. Driscoll, ed., *The Sworn Book of Honourius the Magician as Composed by Honourius through Counsel with the Angel Hocroell* [Gillette: Heptangle Books, 1977, repr. 1983]).

11. After the directions on how to construct the *Sigillum Dei*, most of the *Liber iuratus* is given over to ritual procedures; see Gösta Hedegård, ed., *Liber iuratus Honourii: A Critical Edition of the Latin Version of the Sworn Book of Honorius* (Stockholm:

The brick and sigil form a unit that has probably been together since the early sixteenth century. After consultation of the national brick database, Martijn Defilet, regional archaeologist of the city of Arnhem, tentatively established the brick to be from the first decade of the sixteenth century. The sigil is more difficult to date. The letters are carved into the metal by someone who could write a textualis script and who may have been a trained scribe but not an experienced engraver, judging by the mediocre level of execution. The choice of a textualis makes sense for inscriptions, because it is a somewhat more angular and hence less cumbersome script than a cursiva, but the textualis was so widely used over an extended period of time that it is hard to establish a date and place of origin for the sigil.¹² In view of the description of the *Sigillum Dei* in the *Liber iuratus* and Ganell's *Summa*, the *terminus a quo* for the sigil is the fourteenth century. In the absence of a suitable technique to date the sigil, our best estimation on the basis of the letter forms is that the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* is probably contemporary with or slightly older than the brick, that is, fifteenth or early sixteenth century. There are no distinctive features in the script that could help assign a place of origin other than that it is a northern form of a textualis, meaning that the sigil (or its visual or textual exemplar) could have been produced anywhere in Northwestern Europe.

The brick and sigil are a purposely assembled unit whose specific purpose is unknown. The remnants of mortar on the brick and corrosion on the sigil due to the alkaline properties of the mortar are indications that the brick and sigil had been fixed in place permanently. The sigil was therefore no longer accessible to an operator once it was hidden in situ. Its particular role in a permanent setting precludes all the uses of the *Sigillum Dei* outlined in the *Liber iuratus* and Ganell's *Summa*, for which an operator would have required

Almqvist & Wiksell, 2002), 29–40. See also Robert Mathiesen, “A Thirteenth-Century Ritual to Attain the Beatific Vision from the *Sworn Book of Honorius of Thebes*,” in *Conjuring Spirits: Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic*, ed. Claire Fanger (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1998), 150–57; Katelyn Mesler, “*The Liber iuratus Honorii* and the Christian Reception of Angel Magic,” in *Invoking Angels*, ed. Fanger, 120–24; Frank Klaassen, *The Transformations of Magic: Illicit Learned Magic in the Later Middle Ages and Renaissance* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2013), 103–5. For the ritual procedures in Ganell's *Summa*, see Veenstra, “Honorius and the Sigil of God,” 153–68, 173–77.

12. The manuscript containing Ganell's *Summa* is in a *hybrida* script, while the letters on the sigil are in a textualis (Kassel, Universitätsbibliothek—Landesbibliothek und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel, 4° Ms. astron. 3), whereas the script used in London, British Library, Sloane 313, the sole *Liber iuratus* manuscript to contain both text and sigil, is a cursiva throughout.



Figure 4. A modern, minted *Sigillum Dei* from Italy. Photo courtesy of Andrea Cristofanelli Broglio.

physical access to the sigil. Since the bricks used in the restoration of Doornenburg Castle came from sites of urban renewal, it stands to reason that the brick was once part of a house, but whether this was the house of someone who practiced magic is impossible to establish. Though the sigil could no longer be used in magical operations once it was fixed in place, the combination of brick and sigil may have served one of several functions. If the owner or inhabitant of the house knew that the *Sigillum Dei* was a powerful magical object, they may have wanted to hide it on purpose to avoid persecution, or they may have thought that to incorporate the sigil into the building would somehow benefit the house or its inhabitants. The sigil may have served a protective function, for instance, by shielding a liminal place in the house, such as a main door. Alternatively, it may have been a building sacrifice, which Defilet considers unlikely, however, because magical objects were hardly ever used in this capacity in the late medieval period. That said, Joseph Peterson informed us that he was contacted in 2012 by Andrea Cristofanelli Broglio, who had discovered a pendant *Sigillum Dei* along with several other sigils in his family's mansion (fig. 4). In a personal communication, Andrea told us that he found the sigil in the basement of his house, which dates to the eighteenth century, but which occupies the site of a much older habitation in the Italian region of Marche. The Italian sigil is minted, not hand made, and is of considerably more recent date than the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*.



Figure 5. The brick housing the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*.

Though we may not be able to surmise exactly why the two sigils were hidden, they have in common that their owners thought it opportune to integrate them in their houses.

THE BRICK AND SIGIL AS MATERIAL ARTIFACTS

So far, we have focused on the provenance, history, and purpose of the brick and sigil. Before we continue with an analysis of the place of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* in the South and Northwest European traditions of the *Sigillum Dei*, this section introduces the brick and sigil as material artifacts.

Made out of clay, the brick measures ca. $11 \times 5.3 \times 3$ inches. A circular depression of ca. 3 inches in diameter and 0.3 inch in depth was incised to hold the sigil after the brick had been fired in a kiln (fig. 5). Measuring little less than 3 inches across and being ca. 0.1 inch thick, the sigil fits snugly into the depression, which is a sign that the brick was expressly adapted to contain the sigil. Whoever brought the two objects together had in mind to hide the sigil from sight. It is unlikely that the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* was constructed to be hidden inside the brick, on the other hand, because once fixed in place it lost its purpose for all magical operations described in the *Liber iuratus* and Ganell's *Summa*. Whoever made the sigil must have had access to a source describing its construction. Since depictions of the *Sigillum Dei* to our knowledge were not transmitted independently of the *Liber iuratus* or Ganell's *Summa* before John Dee's revisions and the early modern Solomonic traditions of the *Sigillum Dei*, the person who made the sigil is likely to have



Figure 6. The front of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*.

had access to such a written source, and they will, therefore, have known what uses the *Sigillum Dei* would have had. It is a moot point whether the maker of the sigil and the person who hid it in the brick are one and the same, but if so, the sigil must have been retired from magical operations on purpose.

The *Liber iuratus* and Ganell's *Summa* precisely define matters relating to the construction of a *Sigillum Dei*, not just in terms of the rituals to be carried out, but also with a view to the size, materials, and colors of the sigil. It is clear that the maker of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* did not follow the directions to the letter. The sigil is not made out of parchment, for instance, and its contents are not drawn in the blood of a mole, dove, bat, or hoopoe. Instead, the sigil is made out of an alloy containing a high proportion of lead and probably another metal such as iron. The fact that the object is not pure lead is evident from the front of the sigil, which was turned upward in the brick and suffered a rustlike corrosion after exposure to the alkaline environment of the mortar used to lodge the brick in place (fig. 6). There may be hermetic reasons why lead was used, such as its importance in alchemical transformations, but a pragmatic consideration is that lead is easy to inscribe. Instead of inscriptions in blood, after all, the shapes and letters on the sigil were carved with a sharp object. Fortunately for us, the maker of the sigil chose to work with metal rather than parchment, which probably contributed to the survival of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*.

The pointed depression in the center of the sigil indicates that the maker of the seal used a compass to mark the two concentric circles at the edge of the sigil. He may then have proceeded as instructed in the written sources by making a cross between the two circles to mark the top of the sigil, and by copying the *h* (the *Spiritus asper* denoting the creative breath of God) and the seventy-two-letter Great Schemhamphoras between the two circles, but it is more likely that he first incised the other shapes. In its current state, the pentagram in the center of the sigil is slightly wrongly oriented (witness the uneven bottom legs), but if the sigil is turned so that the tau cross in the middle of the pentagram is upside down, the asymmetry disappears despite the fact that the pentagram remains uneven in all other positions. In this new and presumably correct position, the orientation of the pentagram and the surrounding heptagon and heptagram match the directions in the written sources perfectly. We may assume, therefore, that the maker of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* first drew the shapes, and then proceeded to supply the crosses, letters, words, and names. Since he chose to place the cross that marks the top of the sigil in a position in which the pentagram is asymmetrical, the sigil appears somewhat skewed. The tau cross and the surrounding divine names *El* and *ey* (the latter mistakenly for *Ely*), for instance, are at a slight angle to the vertical axis, but if the sigil is turned in such a way that the tau cross stands straight, the pentagram points downward rather than upward, as Dierselhuis already observed. Be that is it may, the resulting *Sigillum Dei* differs from the descriptions in both the *Liber iuratus* and Ganell's *Summa*, not just in terms of orientation and construction, but also in terms of content.

Reminiscent of Jorge Luis Borges's story "El disco," about a one-sided coin that falls from someone's hand with the one side down, the *Liber iuratus* and Ganell's *Summa* do not concern themselves with the reverse of the sigil. The *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*, however, has three words on the back: *agolb*, *yaubva*, and *vaubua*, respectively (fig. 7). We are in the dark as to the meaning of these words. They may in fact not be words at all, but rather names, acronyms, or phonetic renderings. The rhyming pair *yaubva* and *vaubua*, for instance, may be (inaccurate) phonetic renderings of the divine tetragrammaton, YHVH, that is, when the tetragrammaton is not pronounced as four Hebrew letters, but as a single word.

THE SIGILLUM DOORNENBURGENSIS IN LIGHT OF THE SOUTH AND NORTHWEST EUROPEAN TRADITIONS OF THE SIGILLUM DEI

The *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* is a rare surviving remnant from a magical tradition that must have spread from the Mediterranean region across Europe. In the medieval period, the *Sigillum Dei* appears to have been mainly tied up with



Figure 7. The back of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*.

Ganell's *Summa* and the *Liber iuratus*, but it is unlikely that a sigil empowered to invoke free floating intelligences would not at some moment or other have emancipated itself from its traditional textual confines. The *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* is a case in point, as is, for instance, the *Sigillum Emeth* by John Dee. Yet, in order to give this unique artifact from the Rhine delta in the Low Countries its proper place in a transmission history, however tentative, it is imperative to compare it with other, mainly manuscript sources.

The Honorius text survives in a number of Latin, English, and German manuscripts,¹³ of which only a limited number contain images of the sigil. These are

- Kassel, Universitätsbibliothek—Landesbibliothek und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel, Ms. 4° astron. 3, a manuscript in Latin from the

13. The Latin text (or parts of it) can be found in the Kassel manuscript (Ganell's *Summa*); Halle, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt, 14 B 36 (parts of Ganell's *Summa*, including the second part of the Honorius ritual); London, British Library, Sloane 313 (*Liber iuratus*); London, British Library, Sloane 3854, fols. 112–39 (*Liber iuratus*); and London, British Library, Sloane 3885, fols. 58–96 (*Liber iuratus*). English versions are in London, British Library Royal, 17. A. xlii (*The Sworn Book of Honorius*); and London, British Library, Sloane 3853, fols. 127v–37v (parts of the *Sworn Book*). A German translation of the Kassel manuscript of Ganell's *Summa*, including parts now missing from the Kassel manuscript, can be found in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. germ. fol. 903.

fifteenth century containing the *Summa sacre magice*, a compendium of magical texts written around 1346 by the Catalan or Valencian philosopher Berengario Ganell.¹⁴ The book belonged to John Dee. The text of the *Liber iuratus* is scattered across several chapters in Ganell's *Summa* (notably III.1.2–3, and IV.1.5–6). The sigil is on L.4.f.22 (= fol. 104r; fig. 8).¹⁵

- London, British Library, Sloane 313, a manuscript in Latin from the second half of the fourteenth century containing only the *Liber iuratus*. The book once belonged to Ben Jonson, the playwright, and later to John Dee. The sigil is on fol. 4r (fig. 9).
- London, British Library, Sloane 3853, a manuscript from the sixteenth century containing several magical texts in English and Latin. Folios 127v–137v feature a treatise in English and Latin beginning “The devin sell of God broght from heven be an angell to kyng Salomon the hy and gracius defensative,” containing sections from the *Liber iuratus* and a one-hundred-name Great Schemhamphoras, but explicitly linking the seal to King Solomon. The sigil is on fol. 127v (fig. 10).

As is shown by Sloane 3853, the sigil was recontextualized in the postmedieval period. This was done most famously by John Dee in his angel communications that led to the *Sigillum Emeth*, but the sigil also found its way into

14. Although the *Summa sacre magice* was composed by Berengario Ganell around 1346 and represents the South European tradition of the *Sigillum Dei*, there are no indications that the Kassel manuscript is the original fourteenth-century Spanish production. That said, Ganell was active in what is now Southern France, judging by what little is known about him; see Edmond Falgaïrolle, *Un envoûtement en Gévaudan en l'année 1347* (Nîmes: Catélan, 1892), 68–70; Damaris Gehr, “Spiritus et angeli sunt a Deo submissi sapienti et puro: *Il frammento del Magisterium eumantice artis sive scientiae magicalis*. Edizione e attribuzione a Berengario Ganello,” *Aries* 11 (2011): 191–92; Carlos Gilly, “Tra Paracelso, Pelagio e Ganello: L’ermetismo in John Dee,” in *Magia, alchimia, scienza dal '400 al '700: L’influsso di Ermete Trismegisto*, ed. Carlos Gilly and Cis van Heertum, 2 vols. (Florence: Centro Di, 2002), 1:275–85. Erik Kwakkel, medieval book historian at Leiden University, observes a distinctly French aspect in the hand of the scribe of the Kassel manuscript, an aspect derived from the French Bâtarde (lettre bourguignonne) script. A French rather than Spanish origin for the Kassel manuscript may be in keeping with the origin and main area of distribution of Ganell's writings. Kwakkel dates the manuscript to the fifteenth century, so well after Ganell's lifetime.

15. For a detailed description of the Honorius material in Ganell's *Summa*, see Veenstra, “Honorius and the Sigil of God.” John Dee applied his own system of pagination to the codex; L.4.f.22 means book 4, folio 22 (whereby folio actually means page, rather than leaf). A librarian in recent times added folio numbers, which makes the present page fol. 104r. A facsimile of the entire manuscript is available via

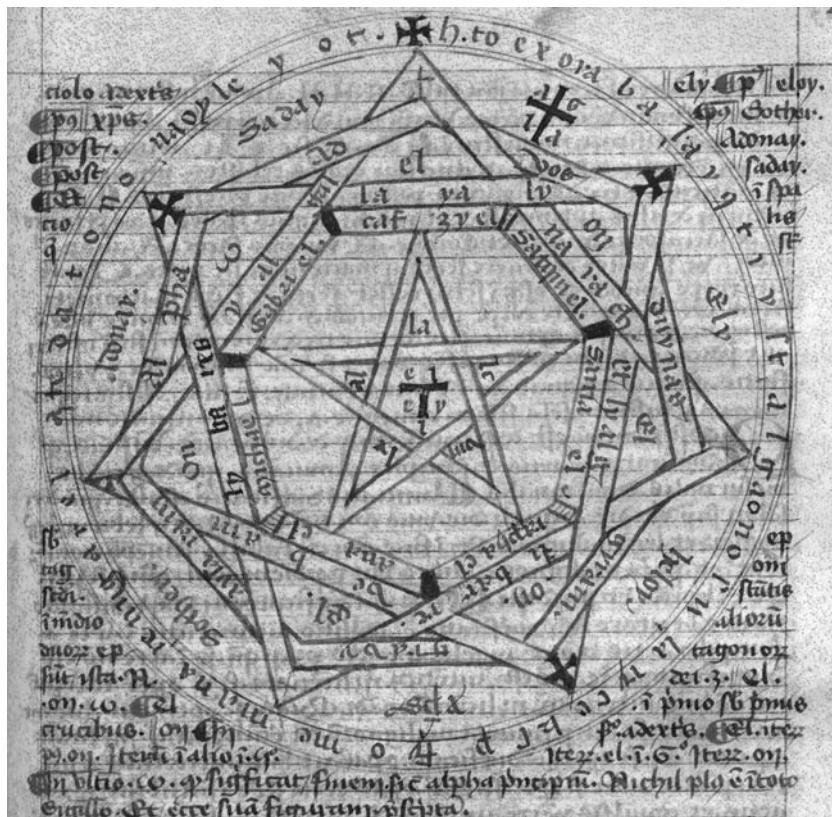


Figure 8. The *Sigillum Dei* in Kassel, Universitätsbibliothek—Landesbibliothek und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel, Ms. 4° astron. 3, fol. 104r (detail).

Reproduced by kind permission of the Universitätsbibliothek

Kassel—Landesbibliothek und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel.

early modern treatises on Solomonic magic. Through personal communications with Joseph Peterson, and with the help of his online esoteric archives, we have been able to add four more manuscript sources to our list, along with the minted sigil from Italy we mentioned earlier, and two printed sources including a *Sigillum Dei*:

the library's digital archive ORKA, <http://orka.bibliothek.uni-kassel.de> [accessed July 7, 2014].

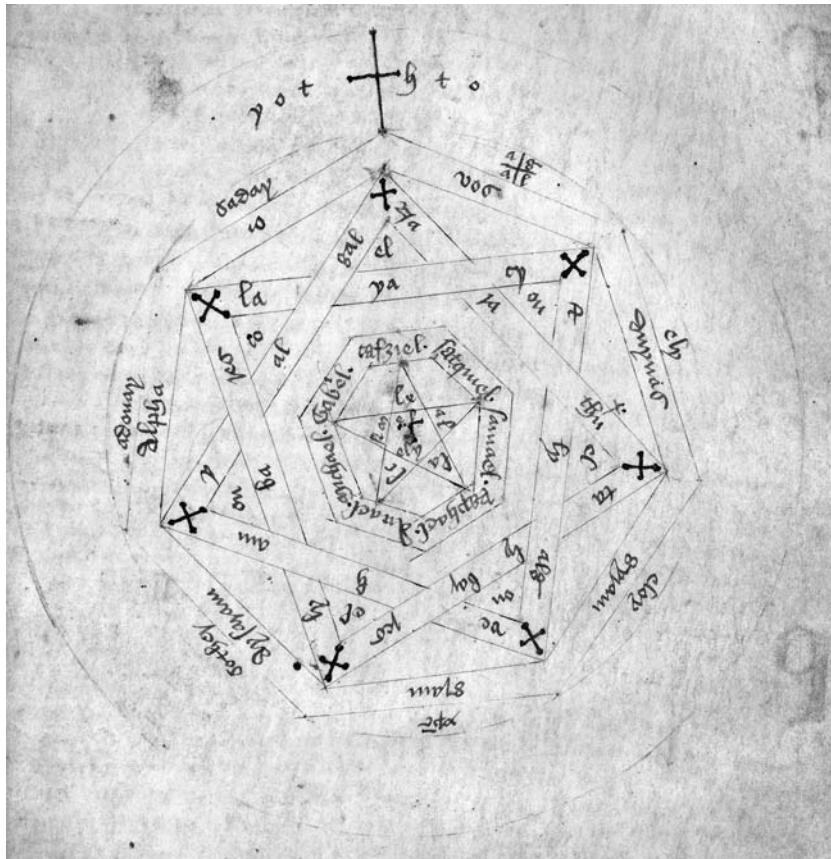


Figure 9. The *Sigillum Dei* in London, British Library, Sloane 313, fol. 4r (detail). Reproduced by kind permission of the British Library. © British Library Board.

- London, British Library, Sloane 3188, a manuscript in English containing John Dee's angel diaries from 1581–83, also known as the *Mysteriorum libri quinque*.¹⁶ The *Sigillum Emeth* (modeled on the *Sigillum Dei*) is on fol. 30r.¹⁷

16. See Joseph H. Peterson, ed., *John Dee's Five Books of Mystery: Original Sourcebook of Enochian Magic from the Collected Works Known as Mysteriorum libri quinque* (Boston: Weiser, 2003); Edward Fenton, ed., *The Diaries of John Dee* (Charlbury: Day Books, 1998); Deborah E. Harkness, *John Dee's Conversations with Angels: Cabala, Alchemy, and the End of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

17. For the sigil, see <http://phergoph.wordpress.com/john-dee-enochian-archival-material/sloane-3188> [accessed July 7, 2014].

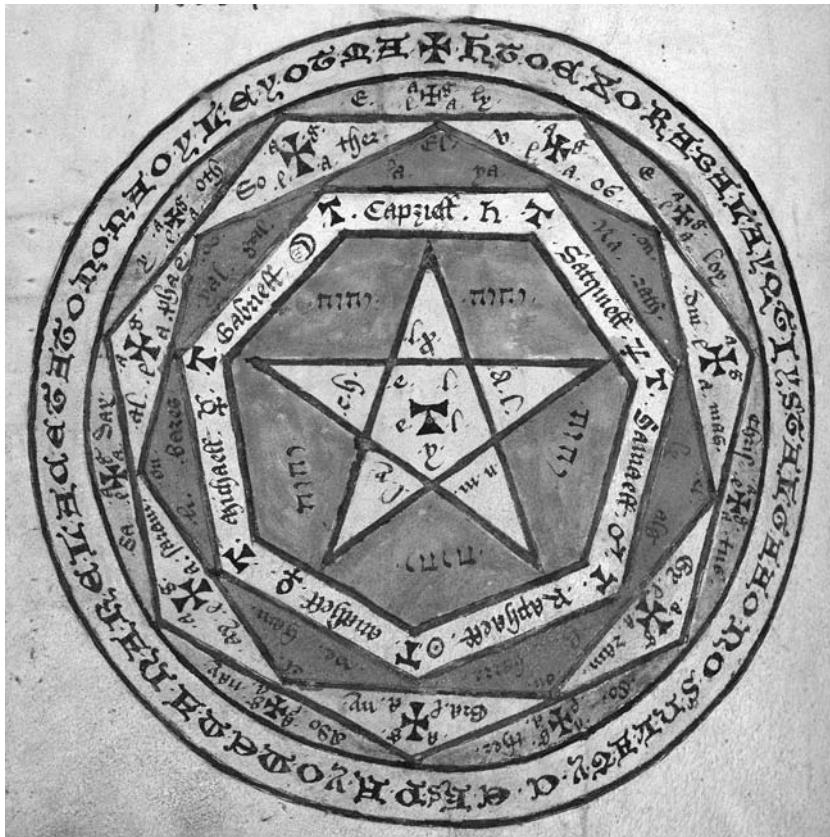


Figure 10. The *Sigillum Dei* in London, British Library, Sloane 3853, fol. 127v. Reproduced by kind permission of the British Library. © British Library Board.

- London, British Library, Sloane 3850, a magical miscellany in Latin and English from the seventeenth century. Included in a treatise on Solomonic magic entitled *Salomonis opus de novem candariis celestibus*, the sigil is on fol. 70v.
- Oxford, Bodleian Library, Michael 276, a manuscript in Italian from the seventeenth century containing a *Clavicolo di Salomone Re d'Israel figlio de David*. The sigil is on fol. 13r.¹⁸
- Oxford, Bodleian Library, Aubrey 24, a manuscript in Latin copied by

18. For the sigil, see <http://www.esotericarchives.com/gifs/aemethms.gif> [accessed July 7, 2014].

John Aubrey (1626–97), antiquary, biographer, and astrologer, and entitled *Zecorbeni, sive, Claviculae Salomonis libri IV*. Aubrey dated his book “1674, May 9” and added a note: “The book from whence I transcribed this was writt by an Italian, and in a very good hand.”¹⁹ The sigil is on fol. 60r.²⁰

- Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. mag. 16, a manuscript in German from the eighteenth century, entitled *Die alleredelste und allerhöchste Kunst und Wissenschaft, das ist: Magia universalis divina angelica ac diabolica*. Described as “das Sigillum Salomonis,” the sigil is on fol. 86r.²¹
- A minted sigil found by Andrea Cristofanelli Broglia in his eighteenth-century house in Italy (see fig. 4).
- A printed sigil in Kircher’s *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*.²² Kircher identifies the sigil as a cabalistic amulet or an amulet of Venus and Mars.
- A printed sigil in Peuckert’s *Pansophie*.²³ Contrary to Kircher’s treatment of the sigil in the main text, it would seem that Peuckert merely included an image of the sigil “to give an impression of the visual aspects of magic,” which is not uncommon at chapter endings in his *Pansophie* and its companion volume *Gabalia*.²⁴ Peuckert identifies the source of the sigil as a roll entitled *ViNiVLVm, seu Claviculae: Das Ist Das Band oder Zaichen SALOMONIS*. The sigil is introduced as a “Remedium probatissimum contra pestem.” Known as “Passauer Kunst” or “Passauer Zettel,” similar rolls with protective charms and magical sigils were used by soldiers in the

19. On Aubrey, see Adam Fox, “Aubrey, John (1626–1697),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/886> [accessed July 7, 2014].

20. For the sigil, see http://www.esotericarchives.com/gifs/au24_60r.gif [accessed July 7, 2014].

21. A facsimile of the entire manuscript is available via Historische Bestände und Nachlässe der UBL, <http://histbest.ub.uni-leipzig.de> [accessed July 7, 2014]. The weblog of Mihai Vărtăjaru contains a wealth of information on the magical collection at Leipzig, <http://studies-vartejaru.blogspot.nl/2013/08/complete-list-of-leipzig-uni-versity.html> [accessed July 7, 2014].

22. Athanasius Kircher, *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, 3 vols. (Rome, 1652–54), 2.2:480. Daniel Stolzenberg, *Egyptian Oedipus: Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), refers to Kircher’s extensive collection of amulets but does not dwell on this particular sigil.

23. Will-Erich Peuckert, *Pansophie: Ein Versuch zur Geschichte der weißen und schwarzen Magie*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 1956), 227.

24. Peuckert, *Pansophie*, 500: “Es ist versucht worden, in den beigegebenen Zeichnungen, soweit sie nicht . . . in den Text gehören, ein Bild des magischen Sehens zu geben.”

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to shield themselves from injury, disease, and death.²⁵

John Dee's *Sigillum Emeth* from 1582 copies the geometrical figures of the *Sigillum Dei* (perhaps from the Kassel manuscript but most likely from Sloane 313, both of which were in his possession at the time), but Dee radically changed their inscriptions. This seems to mark the end of the Honorius tradition of the sigil, since its applications in the early-modern and modern periods have diversified. Sloane 3850, the Oxford and Leipzig manuscripts, and Peuckert's source, testify to a Solomonic tradition, while the *Sigillum Doernenburgensis* and the minted sigil show that the sigil can operate quite independently as a magical artifact. The question now arises whether or not the medieval tradition of the sigil was as uniform and solid as the extant Honorius sources suggest.

A possible answer to this question can be gleaned from a discussion in Athanasius Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*. In a brief section devoted to the *Sigillum Dei*, Kircher provides an explanation along with an image of the sigil, which he calls an "amuletum cabalisticum."²⁶ He does not immediately specify the source from which he derives his material but in the section that follows he quotes from a letter he received from father Thomas de Leon, S.J., his former professor of philosophy, theology, oriental languages, and "abstruse doctrines." Father Thomas speaks of a "Sigillum magicum," which he copied in the letter and which had recently been printed by Duke Ferdinand of Alcalá, the viceroy of Naples.²⁷ A likely earlier source for the sigil, Thomas speculates, would be Don Enrique de Aragón, Marquess of Villena (1384–1434), a celebrated Castilian poet, theologian, and practicing magician. Thomas recalls that Don Enrique was skilled in Hebrew and cabalistic

25. See, for instance, the roll described by Johann Matthias Groß, *Die grosse Macht und Ohnmacht des Fürsten der Finsterniß* [. . .] (Leipzig, 1734), 456–63, esp. 457–58.

26. The *Sigillum Dei* is discussed by Kircher in the section "Amuleti alterius cabalistici heptagoni interpretatio" (*Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, 2.2:479–81).

27. The observations on the "Sigillum magicum" can be found in the section "Alterius magici apotelesmatis explicatio" (id., 2.2:481–83). It is likely that Kircher's terms *amuletum* and *sigillum* refer to the same thing, even though the text does not confirm this unquestionably. Gilly ("Tra Paracelso, Pelagio e Ganello," 280) accepts Kircher's assertions and concludes that the sigil was known as an amulet in Spain. For a similar confusion between the terms *lamin* and *sigil* as used by Simon Forman, see Barbara Howard Traister, *The Notorious Astrological Physician of London: Works and Days of Simon Forman* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 220, n. 9.

magic, and owned several magical books among which was a copy of *Raziel*. Of course, father Thomas wrote two hundred years after Don Enrique, but there is an interesting fifteenth-century source that sheds some light on the latter's magical interests. During his life Don Enrique was suspected of practicing magic and, hounded by Bishop Lope de Barrientos, the unfortunate poet ended up in prison where he perished. At the behest of King John II of Castile, the bishop examined the library of Don Enrique and ordered several of its books to be burned on the basis of heretical and magical content. Around 1450 the bishop wrote a *Tractado del divinar et de sus especies del arte mágica*, which he dedicated to John II and in which he recalled that the burning of Don Enrique's books had taken place as requested. In the second part of the treatise, on the origins of magic ("D'onde ovo nascimiento la arte mágica"), Barrientos briefly discussed some of the works that he had encountered in Don Enrique's collection, of which the *Libro Raziel* was apparently the most important. From this book the bishop learned that Cain, son of Adam, had been instructed in the magical arts by the angel Raziel. Though the idea that angels would perform such tasks was clearly heretical, Barrientos nevertheless embraced the suggestion that magic originated with Cain. Other books he mentioned are the *Clavícula de Salomón*, *Del arte notoria*, and the *Libros de los experimentos*. This last book was tentatively associated by the editor of the *Tractado* with the Oxford manuscript Aubrey 24, which contains a sigil.²⁸ Sadly this is as close as we can get to associating Don Enrique with the *Sigillum Dei*. Father Thomas made a well-educated guess that Don Enrique's library is likely to have contained a copy of the sigil, but as yet this cannot be confirmed.

To Kircher's mind the sigil was clearly an independent entity (as confirmed by Duke Ferdinand commissioning a printed copy), but further evidence is required to prove that this also extends back into the medieval period. As yet, the Honorius tradition remains the dominant route of transmission for the medieval *Sigillum Dei*, though we have come a long way since Hedegård's observation in 2002 that "the fact that there exist slightly different versions of the seal, of which some have been transferred from one context to another, makes one wonder if this testifies to the existence of manuscripts of the LIH

28. See Lope de Barrientos, *Trattato sulla divinazione e sui diversi tipi d'arte magica*, ed. Fernando Martínez de Carnero (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 1999), 110–19. Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, 3 vols. (Madrid: Librería Católica de San José, 1880–82), 1:599–623, has a chapter on Don Enrique and Barrientos with a comprehensive survey of magical literature in Spain in the fifteenth century.

[*Liber iuratus Honori*] independent of those known at present, or, maybe, reflects the difficulties in visualizing and, thus, putting to practical use the vague description of the seal.”²⁹

Since the *Sigillum Doornenburghensis* probably dates from the fifteenth or early sixteenth century, older sources in the form of the Kassel manuscript and Sloane 313 and 3853 are of immediate relevance for shedding some light on its transmission history. However, we decided not to ignore the younger sources and have commented on them in the notes. The Spanish and Italian sigils in particular may tell us something about the South European tradition of the sigil.

For a long time the *Liber iuratus* was believed to be an English production from the fourteenth century, since the only surviving manuscripts originated from the London area. On the basis of this assumption, Gösta Hedegård reconstructed an authoritative text from the extant Latin Sloane manuscripts, taking for granted that the *Liber iuratus* had several defects and inconsistencies. The discovery by Carlos Gilly of Ganell’s *Summa*, however, fundamentally changed the perspective on the Honorius text. The second author of this article, while enjoying the hospitality of the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel for a couple of months in 2006, had the privilege of piecing together an argument for demonstrating that the Honorius material from Ganell’s *Summa* predated the London manuscripts. The evidence is largely philological and we can only touch upon it briefly in this article.³⁰

A painstaking comparison of the textual sources shows that the initial *Liber iuratus* editor had left indelible traces of his modus operandi when he deliberately disrupted the structure of the ritual. The Honorius text in Ganell gives detailed prescriptions for consecrating the Sigil of God so that through it six “works of God” or theurgical practices can be performed, such as the divine vision, the knowledge of God’s power, the absolution of sins, the sanctification that prevents relapse into sin, the redemption of the soul from Purgatory, and the power over all spirits.³¹ Each of these theurgical practices is accompanied by appropriate prayers and petitions. The editor of the Northwest European tradition in the English manuscripts for some reason wished to foreground only one of these theurgical operations, namely, the ceremony that brings about the *visio Dei*, and to that end he reorganized the text, placing the chapter on the consecration of the sigil together with its appropriate

29. Hedegård, ed., *Liber iuratus*, 19, n. 69.

30. For a full discussion of the arguments, the reader is referred to Veenstra, “Honorius and the Sigil of God,” 161–68.

31. See Ganell’s *Summa*, L.4.f.22 (=Kassel manuscript, fol. 104r).

prayer (to enable the divine vision) at the beginning of his text. Inadvertently, he followed a scribal practice that can also be found in Ganell's *Summa*, namely, the habit of avoiding tedious repetitions in copying out identical prayers by simply writing the phrase *et cetera*, thereby referring to an earlier passage. Unfortunately, the *Liber iuratus* editor failed to realize that by foregrounding the prayer for the *visio Dei*, the phrase *et cetera* no longer referred to an earlier passage but to a text that now appears much later in his book. Furthermore, this later passage proves insufficient to reconstruct with certainty the full text of the prayer. Consultation of the text from Ganell's *Summa* quite satisfactorily solves these problems, giving the reader a comprehensive grasp of the structure of the rituals and a full text of the prayers. This demonstrates that the Northwest European Sloane manuscripts were based on (and tampered with) a South European version of the Honorius text very similar to (if not identical with) the text as it can be found in Ganell's *Summa*.

This is not the only instance of editorial tampering in the Sloane books. The most blatant one is no doubt a list of petitions that the *Liber iuratus* editor mistook for a table of contents (with no less than 93 chapters). This shows that the source text used for compiling the Sloane manuscripts was defective or damaged. Another peculiarity of the Sloane manuscripts is that a section on the construction of the sigil provides elaborate and detailed directions in words of an image that does not correspond closely to the drawing of the sigil in Sloane 313, but seems to be more properly geared to the (type of) sigil that one finds in Ganell's *Summa*. In Ganell's *Summa*, in contrast, the image of the *Sigillum Dei* takes first place, and the brief description only highlights some of the sigil's particulars. All of this demonstrates that Ganell's *Summa* is in all likelihood the oldest and most reliable version of the Honorius text so far. Hence we should use it as our starting point for a comparison of the extant medieval sigils.

The sigil in the Kassel manuscript consists of five geometrical figures presented as strips or bands on which (or between which) words and letters can be written. Moving from the circumference to the center, we identify the following five figures (see fig. 8):

1. an encompassing circle containing the Great Schemhamphoras;
2. a heptagon with magical names;
3. a heptagram with seven names of the Creator;
4. a second heptagon with seven angel names;
5. a pentagram that does not contain any writing, at least not between the double lines that constitute the pentagram.

Names and words are not only written in or on these figures, but also in the blank spaces in between, notably:

- 1a. in the seven spaces between the circle and the outer heptagon;
- 3a. in the pointed triangular spaces of the heptagram;
- 5a. in the pointed triangular spaces of the pentagram;
- 5b. in the inner pentagonal space of the pentagram.

On the basis of these figures we can compare the sequences of magical letters, words, and names (in the tables below) as they appear on the different sigils and thereby hopefully shed light on the provenance and transmission of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* (fig. 11). Nearly all the sigils have this basic structure of five figures, with one exception. The sigil in Sloane 3853 does not contain a heptagram but instead has two heptagonal figures. The spaces between the lines have been carefully colored with yellow, red, blue, and green, as instructed in the directions accompanying the sigil. Though the letters, words, and names have all been taken over from the Honorius tradition (which makes this image very useful for comparison), the sigil in Sloane 3853 as such, however, seems to be a different and new creation as if the omission of the heptagram removes something essential from the *Sigillum Dei*. The fact that the *Sigillum Dei* in Sloane 3853 is associated with King Solomon, furthermore, may be another pointer to the new context of this sigil.

For purposes of comparison we decided to standardize the orthography of the writings on the sigils and print all of them in lower case, with abbreviations expanded silently and any punctuation removed. All lists are read clockwise beginning at the topmost point of orientation of the sigil, namely, the cross followed by an *h* in the encompassing circle. This is where the Great Schemhamphoras begins (table 1),³² and right underneath (in table 4) is Cafzyel, the planetary angel of Saturn, the most distant of the planets, followed

32. On the Great Schemhamphoras, see Veenstra, “Honorius and the Sigil of God,” 168–73. In Jewish tradition, the seventy-two-letter name of God goes back on Ex. 14:19–21, where each of the verses consists of seventy-two letters. According to the Midrash (Genesis rabba 44.19), Rabbi Abin asserted that God delivered Israel from Egypt through His Name, which consisted of seventy-two letters. The suggestion that such a magical divine name existed was a source of inspiration for several, quite diverse traditions, of which the Great Schemhamphoras of Ganell is only one. See Ludwig Blau, *Das altjüdische Zauberwesen* (Strasbourg: Karl J. Trübner, 1898), 139–40. Athanasius Kircher has a whole chapter on the seventy-two-letter name of God (*Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, 2.1:267–81), in which he provides elaborate lists, one based on Exodus and another one based on seventy-two verses from the Book of Psalms, organized as a ladder of seventy-two rungs along which seventy-two angels move up and down.



Figure 11. Drawing of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*. Drawing courtesy of Dávid Katona.

by the angelic rulers of the other planets, neatly organized in a descending line from top to bottom following the celestial spheres of the Ptolemaic cosmos, much like Jacob's ladder descending from heaven to earth.

Let us begin then with the Great Schemhamphoras, the seventy-two-letter name of God, which, we learn from Ganell's *Summa*, is in fact an acronym of seventy-two names (in part a Christian mishmash of Greek and Hebrew names):

ha; 1. **theos**; 2. **onay**; 3. **el**; 4. **xps** [Christus]; 5. **on**; 6. **raby**; 7. **alpha ω**; 8. **baruch**; 9. **agla**; 10. **letamynyn**; 11. **adon**; 12. **joth**; 13. **quyesteron**; 14. **tunayon**; 15. **yalgal**; 16. **ysyston**; 17. **sampsoyny**; 18. **thetebar**; 19. **athyonodabazar**; 20. **lauaquyryn**; 21. **geuer**;

22. **athedyon**; 23. **onoytheon**; 24. **nomyx**; 25. **oristyon**; 26. **sanathyel**; 27. **vabalganarytyn**; 28. **lauagelaguyn**; 29. **araton**; 30. **radix**; 31. **yaua**; 32. **capkyb**; 33. **ely**; 34. **kyryos**; 35. **suparyas**; 36. **pantheon**; 37. **flemoyon**; 38. **yuestre**; 39. **onella**; 40. **mamyas**; 41. **elgybor**; 42. **maney**; 43. **asmamyas**; 44. **nathanathoy**; 45. **abracalabrah**; 46. **romolyon**; 47. **epafgricus**; 48. **narach**; 49. **vagalnarytyn**; 50. **gofgamel**; 51. **alla**; 52. **rabur**; 53. **eloon**; 54. **lauazyryn**; 55. **abracaleus**; 56. **tantalatysten**; 57. **eye**; 58. **delectycon**; 59. **ay**; 60. **tunayon**; 61. **occynomeryon**; 62. **nomygon**; 63. **oryona**; 64. **nosulaseps**; 65. **abryon**; 66. **orlon**; 67. **ye**; 68. **layafalasyn**; 69. **eye assereye**; 70. **ydardycon**; 71. **ocleyste**; 72. **tutheon**.³³

The text of Ganell's *Summa* subsequently organizes the initial seventy-two letters of the names in the Great Schemhamphoras into eight groups of nine letters (L.4.f.20, = fol. 103r), a practice that we follow for ease of reference in table 1. In column four, letters on the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* that cannot be established with certainty due to corrosion are printed between square brackets. The sequence begins with an *h*, which is not a letter but denotes the creative breath of God. Orthographic variants such as *c/t*, *r/t*, *i/y*, and even *e/o*, and minim issues (*i/m/n/u/v*) are quite common and will not provide significant information on the transmission.

As we can see in table 1, a notable feature of the Sloane sigils and the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* is that their makers had a hard time producing clear nine-letter sequences, probably because they were not aware of how to construct the Schemhamphoras. The *algaonosu* sequence, for instance, has an intrusive *a* in the Sloane manuscripts and the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*, but not in the Italian sources.³⁴ This might suggest that the additional *a* is a contamination that occurred somewhere in Northwestern Europe (as testified by

33. The complete list of the names in the Great Schemhamphoras can be found in Ganell's *Summa*, II.2.7, L.2.f.25 (= Kassel manuscript, fol. 43r), lines 5–26. The list was published in Veenstra, “Honorius and the Sigil of God,” 172, but since that transcript was based on a poor quality microfilm, we hereby present a corrected version. Kircher in his chapter on the sigil (*Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, 2.2:479) scorns the “maleferiatorum hominum stoliditas” for producing a seventy-two-letter name on the basis of badly transcribed Hebrew. He clearly did not consider that the letters on his sigil constitute a different tradition.

34. Since the Great Schemhamphoras is the most significant sequence of the sigil, we present in this note the lists from the four Italian sources in full (this includes the one presented by Kircher, who most likely copied his sigil from the letter by father Thomas de Leon who based himself on a sigil printed in Naples by Duke Ferdinand of Alcalá). Aubrey 24 (image): *toexora / lyqtyst / alcaonosv / laryters / fyomfmana / rengarel / astadatono / haoyleiotics*; Michael 276 (image): *tocxoraba / laiatisc / algaonosv / tahiigersp / ttiomema / rengarei / atedatolvo / naoiotla*; Kircher (image): *coexoxab / layqtxyh / algaonodn / laxycksp / fionnemana / xenxguxel /*

Table 1. The circle with the Great Schemhamphoras.

Kassel manuscript (image)	Sloane 313 (text)	Sloane 3853 (image)	Sigillum Doornenburgensis
h	scribe h— aspiracionem— deinde:	h	h
toexoraba	toexoraba	toexoraba	ocexora[b]a
layqtiyst	layqcyst	layqtiyst	layqtiyst
algaonosu	algaonosu (corr. ex. algaonosu)	algaonosn	algaonosu
laryceksp	lariteksp	latyceksp	laryceksp
fyomemana	fyomemana	fyomemana	fionama
renugarel	remiarel	rel	renvgarel
atedatono	atedacono	acetatono	atedatono
naoyleyot	naoyleyot	naoyleyotma	nuaoyley[o]t

the “corrected” reading in Sloane 313) and influenced all subsequent sigils produced there. The *renugarel* sequence seems to be fairly consistent on the Continent; the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* and the Italian sigils faithfully follow Ganell’s *Summa*. Sloane 313 has *remiarel* and (leaving aside the *nu/mi* variant) lacks the *g*. This may be due to the poor condition of the source text, but it could also be an oversight or simply a mistake. This is certainly true of the missing *me* in the *fyomemana* sequence and the additional *u* in the *naoyleyot* sequence on the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*. Sloane 3853 has notable difficulties with the sixth (*rel* for *renugarel*) and eighth (*naoyleyotma* for *naoyleyot*) sequences, but these may be postmedieval corruptions since similar problems with the Great Schemhamphoras are also in evidence on the Oxford sigils.³⁵

Table 1a lists a set of divine names from Hebrew and from Greek. On the whole the sequences in table 1a are fairly consistent. Sloane 3853 does not

atedatono / naoyleyot; minted sigil: tocxoraba / layatiysc / algaonosv / laryceksp / tyomemana / renvgarel / atedatono / naoyleyot.

35. The recontextualized sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sigils seem to have lost touch with the older sources, and occasionally take liberties both in form and content. (The Oxford sigils, for instance, have a hexagram instead of a pentagram in the center.) That said, in the final sequences, Kircher’s sigil and the minted sigil follow Ganell’s *Summa* quite accurately. The reading *rel* for *renugarel* is also found on the sigil in Sloane 3850 (and *naoyasystma* for *naoyleyotma*).

Table 1a. The spaces between the circle and the outer heptagon.

Kassel manuscript (image)	Sloane 313 (image)	Sloane 3853 (image)	Sigillum Doornenburgensis
a g 1 a	a g a 1	e + ly	agla
ely	ely	e + loy	ely
heloy	eloy	chris + tus	eloy
xps	xpc	so + ther	cristus
sother	sother	ado + nay	sother
adonay	adonay	sa + day	adonay
saday	saday	y + oth	saday

reserve only one space for the cross with the letters of the word *agla* distributed over its four corners (as in Ganell's *Summa* and Sloane 313), but inserts this cross liberally in all of the seven spaces between the circle and the outer heptagon, and following that also in the seven spaces of the first heptagon, thereby splitting the names that are entered there into two segments or syllables. (In tables 1a and 2 we have indicated this with a +.) Since *agla* no longer has its own space, the scribe of Sloane 3853 moved the list of divine names up one place, making room for one additional name at the end, which the scribe decided should be *yoth*. A peculiar feature of the *agla* cross in Ganell's *Summa*—a feature it shares with the *agla* cross in the Leipzig manuscript, Sloane 3850, and the fourteen crosses in Sloane 3853—is that the letters are distributed in linear fashion from left to right (so that *l* comes under *a*). In Sloane 313 and Kircher's image the letters are distributed clockwise (so that *l* comes under *g*). This anomaly does not seem to belong to a particular tradition or region. There is no *agla*-cross in the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*. The artisan who made the latter contented himself with a plain *agla*, perhaps because of a lack of space. The maker of the minted sigil, on the other hand, opted to retain the cross but not the word *agla*.

Table 2 shows a list of names of which the background is not immediately clear. Nevertheless, the lists are fairly consistent. The only notable variation is in the final word. After *alpha* one is tempted to read *omega*, as is testified by Sloane 313 (both in the image and in the text), and by Aubrey 24.³⁶ Yet,

36. The two final words in Aubrey 24 are *alpha / et ω*; in Michael 276: *alpha / ladaj*; on the minted sigil: *alpha / adai*; in the Leipzig manuscript: *adonay / adalym*,

Table 2. The first heptagon.

Kassel manuscript (image)	Sloane 313 (image)	Sloane 3853 (image)	Sigillum <i>Doornenburgensis</i>
vos	vos	v + os	vos
duynas	duynas	dui + mas	duyna
gyram	gyram	gy + ram	cyram
gravy	grani	gra + ny	grany
aysaram	aysaram	ay + saram	aysa[r]am
alpha	alpha	al + pha	alpha
ad	ω	so + ther	ade

Ganell's *Summa* gives *ad*; the minted sigil has *adai*, and Michael 276 has *ladaj*, to which the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* more or less complies with *ade*, thereby showing its Continental roots.

Table 3 shows the seven names of the Creator. The list in Sloane 3853 is a garbled version of the list in the Kassel manuscript. The *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* is largely consistent with the list in Ganell's *Summa*. The image in Sloane 313 seems to differ with orthographic variants like *narathu* and *talybarres*, which may have been the result of confusion over the readings in the

Table 3. The heptagram with seven names of the Creator.

Kassel manuscript (image)	Sloane 313 (image)	Sloane 3853 (image)	Sigillum <i>Doornenburgensis</i>
narach	narathu	laya	narath
libarre	talybarres	narath	lybarre
lybares	lybares	lealg	lybares
layaly	layacy	libarre	layaly
et lyalg	et lyalg	veham	et lyalg
veham	veham	libares	veham
yalgal	yalgal	yalgal	ya[g]a

in Sloane 3850: alpha / oo. Kircher's image lacks the outer heptagon and simply adds the names to the list of seven names of the Creator that grace the heptagram—even though his list is highly defective: vos / gram / vos / vos / vos / graney / alxa.

Table 3a. The pointed triangular spaces of the heptagram.

Kassel manuscript (image)	Sloane 313 (image)	Sloane 3853 (image)	Sigillum Doornenburghensis
el	el	el	el
on	on	on	on
el	el	el	el
on	on	on	on
el	el	el	el
on	on	on	on
ω	ω	ω	o

directions for the sigil in the same manuscript, which mention *narathuta* and *libarre*, respectively. Even though *narathuta* was subsequently corrected into *narath*, *u* ended up as the final syllable of *narath* and *ta* as the first syllable of *lybarres* (for *libarre*) in the image in Sloane 313, which suggests that the draftsman who made the image probably based himself on the text in the same manuscript. With some exceptions, the younger sources remain less faithful to the Honorius readings from Ganell's *Summa* and the *Liber iuratus*.³⁷

Table 3a alternates the names *El* (God) and *On* (Being) and requires little comment. The list is simple and consistent.³⁸ The artisan who made the *Sigillum Doornenburghensis* may have had some difficulties recognizing the Greek omega, but we trust his *o* serves a similar purpose and does not constitute a significant departure from tradition. Sloane 3850 and the minted sigil have *oo*, perhaps a misreading of *ω* as the fused *oo* customary in late medieval scripts.

Table 4 presents a list of the seven archangels who in Sloane 3853 are explicitly presented as planetary spirits. The Solomonic treatise, which features the sigil in this manuscript, is preceded by seven full-page drawings of

37. Aubrey 24 does not contain this list; Sloane 3850 does; Kircher's image does so too, albeit with slight orthographic variants; the minted sigil also has this list (though the names are difficult to distinguish). In the Leipzig manuscript there are traces of the list but the names are clearly corrupted. The scribe of Michael 276 relied on his own imagination, so it seems: im / asseer / Eh e ie / Emanuel / Eh E ie / ensoph / tetagramaton (in which we can easily recognize *Eye assereye* and the cabalistic *Ein Sof*).

38. Aubrey 24 follows the Kassel and Sloane manuscripts. Kircher's sigil, the Leipzig manuscript, and Michael 276 do not have this list.

Table 4. The second heptagon with seven angel names.

Kassel manuscript (image)	Sloane 313 (image)	Sloane 3853 (image)	Sigillum <i>Doornenburgensis</i>
cafzyel	cafziel	capziell	gabriel
satquiel	satquiel	satquiell	caszyel
samael	samael	samaell	satquiel
raphael	raphael	raphaell	samael
anael	anael	anahell	raphael
michael	michael	michaell	anael
gabriel	gabriel	gabriell	mychael

the angels with their names written on their foreheads or on their tiaras together with the planetary signs drawn on their breast (fols. 124r–27r). This portrait gallery begins with Gabriel (Luna) and is followed by Capciel (Saturn), Satquiell (Jupiter), Samaell (Mars), Raphaell (Sol), Anaell (Venus), and Michaell (Mercury). This sequence is somewhat disorganized. The proper sequence of the planets from the *Stellatum* to the Earth is Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Luna, with which the sequence of angel names in the Kassel and Sloane 313 manuscripts are perfectly aligned. If a list begins with Gabriel (Moon), one would logically expect Michael to come next, followed by Anaell, and the rest. Jumping from Gabriel (Moon) to Capciel (Saturn) is like jumping from the bottom rung to the top rung of the ladder and then moving downward.

The most remarkable anomaly in table 4 is that the artisan of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* made exactly the same mistake and began his list with Gabriel. It is the type of mistake that is most easily understood when one imagines a scribe copying from a circular image and starting at the wrong place (while perhaps also being quite oblivious of the planetary sequence). This oversight in the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* caused the list of names (though correct as a circular sequence) to move up one place.³⁹

39. Regarding the seven angels, the minted sigil and the Leipzig manuscript are consistent with Ganell's *Summa*. Kircher's sigil has *Mahel* instead of *Ana(h)el*, which may be a printing error. Aubrey 24 has Gabriel and Michael trade places; the author of Michael 276 seems clueless: Cafael / Gabriel / Samael / Michael / Saauiel / Arael / Auisiel; and the one of Sloane 3850 is similarly confused: Raphael / Satquiel / Raphael / Arael / Michael / Salriel.

Table 5a. The pointed triangular spaces of the pentagram.

Kassel manuscript (image)	Sloane 313 (image)	Sloane 3853 (image)	<i>Sigillum</i> <i>Doornenburghensis</i>
la	lx	lx	ly
lc	al	al	al
vm	la	nm	la
lx	lc	ly	le
al	nm (um in the text)	ch	nm

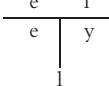
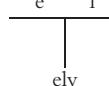
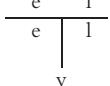
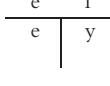
Something similar seems to be case with the letters written in the points of the pentagram in table 5a. When we accept as orthographic variants *lx/ly*, *ly/le*, and *vm/nm*, the sequences in Ganell's *Summa*, Sloane 313, and the *Sigillum Doornenburghensis* are identical; and one might even include Aubrey 24, which (since it contains a hexagram) simply doubles the *le* to fill all the angles.⁴⁰ The only difference is that the lists in Sloane 313, the *Sigillum Doornenburghensis*, and Aubrey 24 have moved forward two places compared to the list in Ganell's *Summa*. Why this is so remains unclear, but it does bring the Doornenburg sigil in line with the image in Sloane 313.

What the letters mean seems difficult to establish, but the learned Kircher (who after all was instructed in Oriental languages by Thomas de Leon) makes an interesting suggestion in his *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*. The sequence *yl al le al um* (which strongly resembles the sequence on the *Sigillum Doornenburghensis*) is corrupted Arabic deriving from “la alla ella alla” (there is no God but God); and *um*, so Kircher believes, is a remnant of the second part of that saying “Mahumet rassul alla” (Muhammed is the messenger of God).⁴¹ According to Kircher the sigil is an amulet of the four sects, namely Judaism, Islam, Christianity, and Paganism, and can enable a person to be a Christian

40. Of the Italian sources, Michael 276 is least in line with the tradition. Aubrey 24: *lx / al / la / le / le / vm*; Michael 276: *el / ie / ia / to / in / on*; Kircher: *yl / al / le / al / um*.

41. Kircher, *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, 2.2:480: “Intra triangula verò ex Arabum amuletaria officina ponuntur *yl, al, le, al, um*, corruptissimè vti omnia alia; volebant enim illud Arabicum exprimere ﷺ لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ﷺ la alla ella alla, non est Deus nisi Deus, quod dum pronunciare nequirent, illorum loco dicta inconcinnissima verba posuerunt, *yl, al, le, al, um*: sed quid sibi velint duo verba, *um*, explico. In dicto Arabum pronunciatio ﷺ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ *Mahumet rassul alla*; atque harum capitales literas referunt *um*.”

Table 5b. The inner pentagonal space of the pentagram.

Kassel manuscript (image)	Sloane 313 (image)	Sloane 3853 (image)	<i>Sigillum Doornenburgensis</i>
			

publically while secretly professing Islam. It goes without saying that Kircher believes this to be the work of demons and that possession of the sigil greatly imperils one's soul.

On the final table 5b we need not comment at great length; the tau cross with the divine names *El* and *Ely* written around it is virtually the same in the different sigils.⁴² The only difference is in the way the letters of *Ely* are distributed. The scribe of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* seems to replicate the image in Ganell's *Summa* (which spells *Ely* in a counter clockwise fashion) but forgot the *l*. Sloane 3853 puts the letters of *Ely* in a clockwise fashion, and Sloane 313 simply adds them in a single line underneath. We already pointed out that Sloane 3853 deviates in several ways; in the spaces between the pentagram and the inner heptagon (which are empty in all the other sigils) the scribe of Sloane 3853 added five times the tetragrammaton in Hebrew.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

From the tables and the discussion above we get the overall impression that the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* remains faithful to the forms and standards for the sigil set by Ganell's *Summa*, but that it also displays features that are indicative for the Northwest European tradition of the *Liber iuratus*. The Great Schemhamphoras on the sigil is a case in point. The *algaonosu* sequence on the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*, for example, has the intrusive *a* of the Sloane manuscripts, but the *renugarel* sequence follows Ganell's *Summa* rather than the readings *remiarel* (Sloane 313) or *rel* (Sloane 3853). In some instances, the Doornenburg sigil opts for the South European readings of Ganell's *Summa* (e.g., *ade* for *ad* in the first heptagon, instead of Sloane 313's *o*); in other

42. The one exception is Michael 276, which gives the tetragrammaton in Hebrew with the letter tau in the middle.

instances it follows the readings of the Northwest European manuscripts (e.g., in the letters in the triangular spaces of the pentagram). There is good reason, therefore, to conclude that the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* is somehow an important link between the South and the Northwest European traditions of the sigil.

There are, however, other aspects of the construction of the sigil that briefly require our attention since they shed further light on the position of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*. Contrary to Ganell's *Summa*, which has a detailed image, the text of the *Liber iuratus* from the Sloane manuscripts gives meticulous directions on how the names and letters should be positioned on the sigil. The relative positions of the names that we listed above in tables 3 and 4 are described by the Sloane editor in great detail. Though the directions are somewhat tedious and repetitive, they nevertheless require our close attention. Instead of translating or quoting the Latin, we provide a concise and functional paraphrase:

The name *Layaly* should be placed in such a way that *La* is immediately above *Cas* of *Casziel* and *ya* above *ziel*; *ly* should be between an intersection and a cross. *Na* of *Narath* should be above *Sat* of *Satquiel*, *ra* should be above *quiel* and *th* between an intersection and a cross. *Li* of *Libarre* should be immediately above the first syllable of *Raphael*, and *bar* above the final syllable; *re* should be between an intersection and a cross. *Ly* of *Lybares* should be above the first syllable of *Michael*, and *ba* above the final syllable; *res* should be between an intersection and a cross. *Et* of *Et lyalg* should be above the first syllable of *Samael*, *ly* above the final syllable, and *alg* between an intersection and a cross. *Ve* of *Veham* should be above the first syllable of *Anael* and the letter *h* above the final syllable; *am* should be between an intersection and a cross. The letter *Y* of *Yalgal* should be above the first syllable of *Gabriel* and *al* above the final syllable; *gal* should be between an intersection and a cross.⁴³

We crave the indulgence of the readers and invite them to compare these directions with the images from Ganell's *Summa* and Sloane 313. It will then

43. The Latin text is very elaborate. For each direction the author uses approximately sixty words, which in our paraphrases is brought down to approximately thirty. By way of example, we quote the prescription for the name *layaly*: “in eadem parte, que est supra ‘Casziel’, sillabe cuiusdam sancti Dei nominis scribantur, ita quod hec sillaba: ‘la’ scribatur in illo loco lateris predicti, qui est supra primam sillabam de ‘Casziel’, et hec sillaba: ‘ya’ in illo loco eiusdem lateris, qui est supra ultimam sillabam eiusdem ‘Casziel’, et hec sillaba: ‘ly’ in illo loco eiusdem lateris, qui est <inter> latus intersecans predictum latus et crucem secundi anguli eiusdem” (Hedegård, ed., *Liber iuratus*, 68).

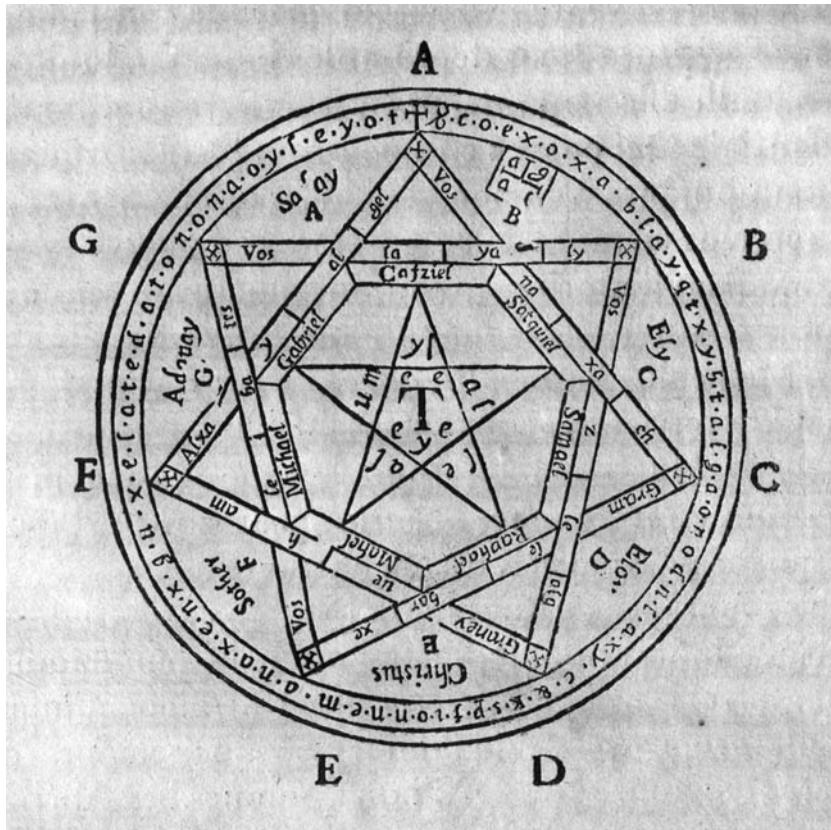


Figure 12. The *Sigillum Dei* in Athanasius Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* (Rome, 1652–54), 2.2:480 (detail).

become apparent that the directions in the *Liber iuratus* are far better suited to the image in Ganell's *Summa* than to the image in Sloane 313. From our collection of sigils there are precisely two others that more or less correspond with the directions. One is the minted sigil (see fig. 4, though we should add that the quality of the image is such that not all letters are clearly distinguishable). The other is the sigil printed by Kircher, which has several flaws but nevertheless embodies important elements of what can be seen as a distinct Hispano-Italian tradition (fig. 12). Apparently the distribution and positioning of the syllables has a special significance, and the author of the Northwest European tradition was aware of this as he patiently documented in the form

of directions what was probably represented visually in a manuscript or as an actual sigil that is closely related to the image in the Kassel manuscript of Ganell's *Summa*.

Granted that the Sloane text may be based on an image like the one in Ganell's *Summa*, then where did the image from Sloane 313 derive from? It is on this question that the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* can shed an interesting light. Again, the reader is invited to make a comparison between the Doornenburg sigil and the directions above, and between the Doornenburg sigil and the image from Sloane 313 (with the caveat that due to an error the angel names have shifted one place). From this comparison it becomes clear that the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* greatly resembles the Sloane image in that it deviates from the directions in similar ways. The seven names of the creator are distributed across the heptagram in almost identical ways, with the sole difference that the image in Sloane 313 faithfully processed the *narathuta* mistake from the directions in the same manuscript. It is probable, therefore, that the maker of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* worked from a written source similar to the *Liber iuratus* in Sloane 313, because he arrived at the same distribution pattern for the seven names of the Creator as the scribe of Sloane 313 did. Yet the fact that the maker of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* did not reproduce the *narathuta* mistake indicates that he probably relied on a different manuscript. One should bear in mind, however, that Ganell's *Summa* does not contain a detailed description of the relative positions of the seven divine names on the sigil, so that the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* can remain faithful to Ganell's text too, even though it deviates from the image in the *Summa*.

Finally, one of the most important functions of the sigil is that it gives binding force and strength to rituals and invocations. Hence, it is important that the sigil in some way or other shows or even flaunts its capacity to bind and coerce. To what extent does the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* live up to the standards set by the sigil in Ganell's *Summa*?

The heptagram and the pentagram in the *Sigillum Dei* from Ganell's *Summa* are—in the words of the poet of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*—endless knots. They are like ribbons or ropes either passing underneath or crossing over the piece of ribbon or rope with which they self-intersect, only to end up where they began. If we follow the heptagram and the pentagram clockwise (the way we have read the sequences of words and names heretofore) we notice they first pass under and then cross over at every junction where they self-intersect (and then repeat this seven or five times respectively, to come full circle). This goes for the heptagram and the pentagram in the Kassel

manuscript and on the minted sigil, and for the heptagram in Sloane 313, Sloane 3850, and Kircher. The other images draw single-line pentagrams, or even single-line heptagons (such as Sloane 3853). On the *Sigillum Doornenburgen sis* and the sigils in Michael 276 and the Leipzig manuscript, we find double-line heptagrams that self-intersect in a fully transparent way, so that the idea of a rope tying itself into a knot is regrettably wasted. Certainly in the case of the Doornenburg sigil, which was engraved in lead, this was an easier way of carving the heptagram, yet the endless knot is sadly missed. The image in Ganell's *Summa* clearly sets the standard for how the sigil should be constructed.

The outer heptagon has fallen prey to similar variations. It is either absent (as in Kircher's sigil), or drawn as a single line (as in Sloane 3853 and the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*), as a strip or band that has dropped into the background (as in Aubrey 24, Michael 276, and the Leipzig manuscript), or it is a more prominent band, drawn round the heptagram (as in Sloane 313 and 3850). Again the *Sigillum Dei* in Ganell's *Summa* creates a more intricate image: the outer heptagon is carefully interlaced with the heptagram and almost literally drawn into the knot.

The inner heptagon in Ganell's *Summa* is not like the ones in the minted sigil or the sigil in Sloane 313 and 3850, floating freely and unattached within the heptagram, but on the contrary firmly fastened and attached to the heptagonal inner rim of the heptagram. This is also what we see in Kircher's sigil, on the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis*, and in Aubrey 24 and the Leipzig manuscript, but unlike those images the *Sigillum Dei* in Ganell's *Summa* has at the seven angles little strips (alternately painted with blue ink) that conspicuously seem to fasten it onto the heptagram, thus strengthening the idea of an intricate knot.

The way in which the seven-sided figures are attached and interlaced suggests there is a distinction between the outer figures and the inner figure (the pentagram) of the sigil. In his chapter on the "amuletum cabalisticum," Athanasius Kircher made a clear distinction between the heptagram and the pentagram. The heptagram is dedicated to Venus, he asserts, and the pentagram to Mars. Consequently the purpose of the sigil is to satisfy carnal desires, to incite love, and to procure victory over adversaries.⁴⁴ This interpretation is very much geared to the overall program of the *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* and is not really based on any knowledge of the *Sigillum Dei* or the Honorius text,

44. Kircher, *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, 2.2:481.

yet the distinction between the seven-sided and five-sided shapes seems pertinent, especially because the eternal knots of the pentagram and the seven-sided figures around it are *not* interlaced. We propose a reading that differs from Kircher's, but that still takes into account the autonomous states of being of the seven-sided and five-sided figures: the endless knot of the heptagram casts a binding spell on the Creator and the angelic (and planetary) host to exert their benevolent and loving influence on the world of man, represented by the pentagram and marked by the redemptive sign of the tau.⁴⁵ God itself, as is appropriate from a medieval perspective, occupies the outermost sphere of the sigil in the form of the Great Schemhamphoras. This appears to be the meaning, one might even say the "cosmology," of the *Sigillum Dei*. To represent this meaning successfully, the knots and intertwined figures are essential. Compared to the standard set by the sigil in Ganell's *Summa*, the artwork of the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* and the Northwest European tradition of the *Sigillum Dei* lacks the sophistication to impress its binding force or even its cosmology on the beholder.

Naturally, this should not detract our attention from the fact that the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* is a highly significant material artifact in the history of magic. Hence, we briefly recapitulate the main conclusions of our discussion. Dating back to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* is, to date, the oldest extant *Sigillum Dei* in the world. Though doubtlessly akin to the sigil from Ganell's *Summa*, the Doornenburg sigil has features that place it between the Southern and Northwestern traditions of the sigil as they are known especially from Ganell's *Summa* and the *Liber iuratus Honorii*, respectively. In fact, the Dutch sigil sheds new light on both traditions precisely by being a missing link of some sort. Compared to the sigil from Ganell's *Summa*, the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* lacks the precision and the grace that lend binding significance and perhaps even efficacy to the *Sigillum Dei*. Nevertheless, its existence as a material artifact and its concealment in a brick that was (in all likelihood) part of a privately owned house demonstrate that it was emancipated from the manuscript tradition and the theurgical operations outlined therein. This phenomenon was first documented in 1582 by John Dee, who redesigned the *Sigillum Dei* in a radically new way, and in 1653 by Athanasius Kircher who reported on a printed

45. The tau as a mark of redemption appears in Ez. 9:4: "et dixit Dominus ad eum transi per medianam civitatem in medio Hierusalem et signa thaum super frontes virorum gementium et dolentium super cunctis abominationibus quae fiunt in medio eius."

version of the sigil, but the *Sigillum Doornenburgensis* pushes the beginnings of recontextualization back even further. We cannot ascertain with certainty what the magical function of the sigil was separated from the Honorius traditions, but its independence from the written sources and its survival as a material artifact (against all odds!) are sufficient testimony to its significance for the study of the history of magic.